

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 SAA-01 SES-02 OMB-01 IO-13 SSM-03 /094 W
-----095581 250257Z /73

R 241315Z AUG 78
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6540
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

S E C R E T RABAT 5181

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MO, PEPR, XF, US
SUBJ: MOROCCO CALLS FOR AN ARAB SUMMIT AFTER CAMP DAVID

REF: A. STATE 212523 (NOTAL), B. STATE 215079 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. IN AN AUGUST 20 INTERVIEW MOROCCAN FONMIN BOUCETTA CALLED FOR AN ARAB SUMMIT TO BE HELD "DIRECTLY AFTER" CAMP DAVID IN LATE SEPTEMBER OR EARLY OCTOBER. MOROCCO HAS PUBLICLY SUPPORTED CONVENING AN ARAB SUMMIT SINCE MAY, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST MENTION OF A TIMETABLE. BOUCETTAS LAID THE BURDEN OF
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OVERCOMING ISRAELI "INTRANSIGENCE" ON THE US AND ARGUED THAT THE ARAB SUMMIT WOULD BE OF "CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE" SINCE IT WILL EXAMINE THE RESULTS OF CAMP DAVID. BOUCETTA'S REMARKS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH KING HASSAN'S RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER ON CAMP DAVID, SUGGEST CAMP DAVID REPRESENTS FOR MOROCCO A POINT BEYOND WHICH IT WILL HAVE TO FOLLOW A GENERALLY ACCEPTED ARAB POSITION. MOROCCO'S CALL FOR THE SUMMITE, FOLLOWING CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH

EGYPT AND OTHERS, MAY BE AN ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE ARAB POSITION IN THE DIRECTION OF MODERATION, WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF CAMP DAVID, OR FAILING THAT TO ASSURE A CLEAR ISOLATION OF "REJECTIONISTS" FROM THOSE ARAB STATES READY TO WORK FOR PEACE. END SUMMARY.

2. CALL FOR SUMMIT. SPEAKING TO EGYPTIAN PRESS AGENCY MENA ON AUGUST 20, MOROCCAN FONMIN BOUCETTA STATED THAT AN ARAB SUMMIT IS NOW "INDISPENSABLE FOR RE-EVALUATION THE SITUATION IN THE ARAB WORLD AND ADOPTING NEW RESOLUTIONS." PLEDGIN MOROCCO'S FULL SUPPORT OF THE EARLIER CALL FOR A SUMMIT BY THE ARAB SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE HEADED BY SUDAN'S NUMAYRI, BOUCETTA PROPOSED A DATE IN LATE SEPTEMBER OR EARLY OCTOBER, "DIRECTLY AFTER THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT." BOUCETTA SAID THAT PRESIDENT SADAT'S "COURAGEOUS" INITIATIVE HAD FORCED ISRAEL "TO FACE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE WORLD OPINION" AND HAD BEGUN TO MODIFY ISRAELI OPINION; BUT "ISRAELI ARROGANCE AND INTRANSIGENCE" HAS BLOCKED FURTHER PROGRESS, AND THAT "IT IS INCUMBENT ON THE US TO PARRY" THIS ARROGANCE. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE ARAB SUMMIT WILL TAKE ON "A CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE" BECAUSE THE DISCUSSIONS WILL TAKE PLACE "IN THE LIGHT OF THE RESULTS" OF THE CAMP DAVID MEETINGS. HE ALSO REPEATED THE KING'S EARLIER CRITICISM OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN LEBANON (RABAT 3902).

3. CAMP DAVID TALKS. BOUCETTA'S STRESS ON US RESPONSIBILITY FOR OVERCOMING ISRAEL'S INTRANSIGENCE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CAMP DAVID TALKS PARALLELS THE URGENCY AND CONCERN EVIDENT IN KING
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HASSAN'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER AND AMBASSADOR BENJELLOUN'S PRESENTATION (REFTELS). THE MOROCCAN MESSAGE IS THAT DESPITE THE GOM'S MODERATE PREDILECTIONS AND SUPPORT FOR SADAT'S INITIATIVE, IT VIEWS THE CAMP DAVID TALKS AS A POINT BEYOND WHICH IT WILL BE OBLIGED TO FOLLOW MAJORITY ARAB OPINION, WITH THE RESULTS OF THE US-SPONSORED MEETING A CRUCIAL DETERMINANT OF FUTURE ARAB ATTITUDES.

4. MODERATE COORDINATION. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME MOROCCO HAS PROPOSED A SPECIFIC TIME FRAME FOR AN ARAB SUMMIT. IT HAS, HOWEVER, SUPPORTED A SUMMIT SINCE SUDANESE PRESIDENT NUMAYRI'S VISIT HERE IN MID-MAY: IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS KING HASSAN DISPATCHED A REPRESENTATIVE TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND IN LATE JUNE PUBLICLY STATED THAT A SUMMIT MEETING MUST BE HELD (RABAT 2845, 3902). FONMIN BOUCETTA AND PRIMIN OSMAN CONFERRED WITH NUMAYRI SEVERAL TIMES IN JULY AND STRONGLY ENDORSED HIS EFFORTS. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENTS, EGYPTIAN VICE-PRESIDENT MUBARAK MET WITH KING HASSAN ON THE MIDDLE EAST IN LATE JULY AND, ACCORDING TO A LOCAL EGYPTIAN CONTACT, SECURED HASSAN'S SUPPORT FOR "AN INITIATIVE" BY THE US PRESIDENT. FOLLOWING A VISIT BY SAUDI CROWN PRINCE FHAD IN EARLY JULY, ROYAL COUNSELLOR BENSOUDA TRAVELED TO SAUDI ARABIA IN AUGUST AND TOLD A SAUDI PAPER ON AUGUST 10 THAT MOROCCO AND

SAUDI ARABIA AGREED THAT A SUMMIT MUST BE HELD URGENTLY TO RESTORE ARAB UNITY. FINALLY, FONMIN BOUCETTA'S AUGUST 20 STATEMENTS WERE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDED BY AN AUGUST 18 MEETING BETWEEN KING HASSAN AND EGYPTIAN PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR HASAN AT-TUHAMI.

5. THE INTENSTIY AND PATTERN OF THESE CONSULTATIONS SUGGEST THAT SOME DEGREE OF COORDINATION MAY BE BEHIND THE GOM ANNOUNCEMENT. THE CONVENING OF AN ARAB SUMMIT UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE MODERATE-DOMINATED ARAB SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE APPEARS TO OFFER A FORUM CON-DICIVE TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF A MODERATE POSITION. ALTHOUGH MOROCCO WOULD BE HAPPY TO SEE A MODERATE VIEW PREVAIL, THE KING HAS ARGUED PRIVATELY IN THE PAST THAT "REJECTIONIST" STATES MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO SHAPE THE ARAB CONSENSUS. IF SUCH STATES ARE NOT PREPARED TO JOIN THE MODERATE MAJORITY, THEY MUST BE ISOLATED.

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WITH THE INTRANSIGENTS ON THE SIDELINES, THE KING BELIEVES, THOSE ARAB STATES PREPARED TO SUPPORT CONTINUED NEGOTIATIONS COULD THEN MOVE AHEAD WITH THE BUSINESS OF MAKING PEACE WITH ISRAEL.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARAB STATES, SUMMIT MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978RABAT05181
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780347-0975
Format: TEL
From: RABAT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780828/aaaaawxm.tel
Line Count: 140
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9906a45c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 212523, 78 STATE 215079
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1632991
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MOROCCO CALLS FOR AN ARAB SUMMIT AFTER CAMP DAVID
TAGS: PEPR, MO, XF, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9906a45c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014